What is claimed is:

1. In a remote appliance for coupling a data collection device to a central server, said central server being coupled to the Internet, said remote appliance having a port coupled to said data collection device, said remote appliance having the capability of connecting to the Internet, said remote appliance having a memory containing an encryption key, said data collection device storing a data file, said method comprising:

storing respective first and second polling schedules in said remote appliance;

polling said data collection device according to said first polling schedule;

storing a copy of said data file in said remote appliance in accordance with said first polling schedule;

connecting said remote appliance to the Internet in accordance with said second polling schedule;

identifying said remote appliance to said central server over the Internet using said encryption key; and

transferring said data file stored on said remote appliance to said central server.

2. A method in accordance with claim 1, said system further including an accounting server, said method further comprising:

connecting said accounting server to the Internet; and

transferring said data file stored on said central server to said accounting server,

whereby said accounting server has access to data collected at said data collection device.

3. A method in accordance with claim 1, where data collection device is a point of sale terminal.

4. A method in accordance with claim 1 where data collection device is a vending machine.

5. A method in accordance with claim 1, where data collection device is an employee time clock.

6. A remote appliance for coupling a data collection device to a central server, said data collection device storing a data file, said central server being coupled to the Internet, said remote appliance comprising:

a memory, said memory storing a first polling schedule, a second polling schedule and an encryption key;

a port coupled to said data collection device, said remote appliance polling said data collection device through said port according to said first polling schedule, said remote appliance receiving said data file through said port;

said memory further storing a copy of said data file in said remote appliance in accordance with said first polling schedule;

an Internet connection coupling said remote appliance to the Internet, said remote appliance connecting to the Internet in accordance with said second polling schedule;

said remote appliance adapted to send a message based on said encryption key to said central server over the Internet for identifying said remote appliance to said central server; and

said remote appliance adapted to transfer said data file stored on said remote appliance to said central server.

7. An apparatus in accordance with claim 6, wherein said system further comprises:

an accounting server, said accounting server connecting to the Internet for transferring said data file stored on said central server to said accounting server, whereby said accounting server has access to data collected at said data collection device.

8. An apparatus in accordance with claim 6, where data collection device is a point of sale terminal.

9. An apparatus in accordance with claim 6, where data collection device is a vending machine.

10. An apparatus in accordance with claim 6, where data collection device is an employee time clock.

11. In a system for viewing remote data on a personal computer running an Internet browser, said system having a remote appliance for coupling a data collection device to a central server, said central server being coupled to the Internet, said central server including a web site, said remote appliance having a port coupled to said data collection device, said remote appliance having the capability of connecting to the Internet, said remote appliance having a memory containing an encryption key, said data collection device storing a data file, said method comprising:

storing respective first and second polling schedules in said remote appliance;

polling said data collection device according to said first polling schedule;

storing a copy of said data file in said remote appliance in accordance with said first polling schedule;

connecting said remote appliance to the Internet in accordance with said second polling schedule;

identifying said remote appliance to said central server over the Internet using said encryption key;

transferring said data file stored on said remote appliance to said central server;

providing access to said data file on said web site stored on said central server,

connecting said personal computer to the Internet; and

accessing said web site on said central server with said personal computer;

whereby a user at said personal computer has access to data collected at said data collection device.

12. A method in accordance with claim 11, wherein said system further including an accounting server, said method comprising:

connecting said accounting server to the Internet;

transferring said data file stored on said central server to said accounting server,

whereby said accounting server has access to data collected at said data collection device.

13: A method in accordance with claim 11, where data collection device is a point of sale terminal.

14. A method in accordance with claim 11, where data collection device is a vending machine.

15. A method in accordance with claim 11, where data collection device is an employee time clock.

16. A network system comprising:

a data collection device for storing a data file;

a remote appliance coupled to said data collection device, said remote appliance comprising a memory storing an encryption key, a first polling schedule, a second polling schedule and an encryption key; said remote appliance further including a port coupled to said data collection device, said remote appliance adapted to receive said data file through said port in accordance with said first polling schedule and store said data file in said memory, said remote appliance having the capability of connecting to the Internet;

an Internet connection coupling said remote appliance to the Internet, said remote appliance connecting to the Internet in accordance with said second polling schedule;

a central server coupled to the Internet, said central server including a web site;

said remote appliance adapted to send a message based on said encryption key to said central server over the Internet for identifying said remote appliance to said central server;

said remote appliance adapted to transfer said data file stored on said remote appliance to said central server; and

a personal computer running an Internet browser, said personal computer being connected to the Internet and adapted for accessing said web site including said data file on said central server;

whereby a user at said personal computer has access to data collected at said data collection device.

17. An apparatus in accordance with claim 16, wherein said system further comprises:

an accounting server, said accounting server connecting to the Internet for transferring said data file stored on said central server to said accounting server, whereby said accounting server has access to data collected at said data collection device.

18. An apparatus in accordance with claim 16, where data collection device is a point of sale terminal.

19. An apparatus in accordance with claim 16, where data collection device is a vending machine.

20. An apparatus in accordance with claim 16, where data collection device is an employee time clock.

21: In a system for viewing remote data on a personal computer running an Internet browser, said system having a first and second remote appliances for coupling respective first and second data collection devices to a central server, said central server being coupled to the Internet, an accounting server, each of said first and second remote appliances having a respective first and second ports coupled to said first and second data collection devices respectively, each of said first and second remote appliances having the capability of connecting to the Internet and having respective first and second memories containing respective first and second encryption keys, said first and second data collection devices storing respective data files, said method comprising:

storing a copy of said first data file in said first remote appliance;

storing a copy of said second data file in said second remote appliance;

connecting said first remote appliance to the Internet;

transferring said first data file stored on said remote appliance to said central server;

connecting said second remote appliance to the Internet;

transferring said second data file stored on said remote appliance to said central server;

consolidating said first data file and second data file into a consolidated data file on said central server;

connecting said accounting server to the Internet;

transferring said consolidated data file on said central server to said accounting server,

whereby an accounting server is provided with consolidated data from data collected from said first data collection device and data collected from said second data collection device.

22. A method in accordance with claim 21, said central server further including a web site, said system further including a personal computer, said method comprising:

providing access to said consolidated data file on said web site stored on said central server;

connecting said personal computer to the Internet; and

accessing said web site on said central server with said personal computer;

whereby said personal computer has access to consolidated data collected at said first data collection device and said second data collection device.

23 A method in accordance with claim 21, where data collection device is a point of sale terminal.

24. A method in accordance with claim 21, where data collection device is a vending machine.

25. A method in accordance with claim 21, where data collection device is an employee time clock.

26. A network system comprising:

a first data collection device for storing a first data file;

a second data collection device for storing a second data file;

a first remote appliance coupled to said first data collection device, said first remote appliance comprising a first memory, said remote appliance further including a first port coupled to said first data collection device, said first remote appliance adapted to receive said first data file through said first port and store said first data file in said memory, said first remote appliance having the capability of connecting to the Internet;

a second remote appliance coupled to said second data collection device, said second remote appliance comprising a second memory, said remote appliance further including a second port coupled to said second data collection device, said second remote appliance adapted to receive said second data file through said second port and store said second data file in said memory, said second remote appliance having the capability of connecting to the Internet;

an Internet connection coupling said first remote appliance to the Internet;

an Internet connection coupling said second remote appliance to the Internet;

a central server coupled to the Internet, said central server including a web site;

said first remote appliance adapted to transfer said first data file stored on said first remote appliance to said central server;

said second remote appliance adapted to transfer said second data file stored on said second remote appliance to said central server;

said central server providing a consolidated data file by combining data from said first data file and data from said second data file into a consolidated data file; and

an accounting server, said accounting server connecting to the Internet for transferring said consolidated data file stored on said central server to said accounting server,

whereby said accounting server has access to data collected at said first data collection device and said second data collection device.

27. An apparatus in accordance with claim 26, wherein said system further comprises:

a personal computer running an Internet browser, said personal computer being connected to the Internet and adapted for accessing said web site including said consolidated data file on said central server;

whereby a user at said personal computer has access to data collected at said first data collection device and said second data collection device.

28. An apparatus in accordance with claim 26, where data collection device is a point of sale terminal.

29. An apparatus in accordance with claim 26, where data collection device is a vending machine.

30: An apparatus in accordance with claim 27, where data collection device is an employee time clock.

31. In a system for viewing remote data on a personal computer running an Internet browser, said system having a first and second remote appliances for coupling respective first and second data collection devices to a central server, said central server being coupled to the Internet, a first accounting server, a second accounting server, each of said first and second remote appliances having respective first and second memories and a respective first and second ports coupled to said first and second data collection devices respectively, each of said first and second remote appliances having the capability of connecting to the Internet, said method comprising:

storing a copy of said first data file in said first memory of said first remote appliance;

storing a copy of said second data file in said second memory of said second remote appliance;

connecting said first remote appliance to the Internet;

transferring said first data file stored on said first remote appliance to said central server;

connecting said second remote appliance to the Internet;

transferring said second data file stored on said second remote appliance to said central server;

connecting said first accounting server to the Internet;

transferring said first data file stored on said central server to said first accounting server,

connecting said second accounting server to the Internet;

transferring said second data file stored on said central server to said second accounting server,

whereby said server provides said first accounting server with data collected from said first data collection device and said server provides said second accounting server with data collected from said second data collection device.

32. A method in accordance with claim 31, wherein said system further including a first personal computer and a second personal computer, said method comprising:

providing access to said first data file on said web site stored on said central server;

connecting said first personal computer to the Internet and accessing said first data file on said web site;

providing access to said second data file on said web site stored on said central server;

connecting said second personal computer to the Internet and accessing said second data file on said web site;

whereby said first personal computer has access to said first data collected at said first data collection device and said second personal computer has access to said second data collected at said second data collection device.

33. A method in accordance with claim 32, where data collection device is a point of sale terminal.

34. A method in accordance with claim 32, where data collection device is a vending machine.

35: A method in accordance with claim 32, where data collection device is an employee time clock.

36. A network system comprising:

a first data collection device for storing a first data file;

a second data collection device for storing a second data file;

a first remote appliance coupled to said first data collection device, said first remote appliance comprising a first memory, said remote appliance further including a first port coupled to said first data collection device, said first remote appliance adapted to receive

said first data file through said first port and store said first data file in said memory, said first remote appliance having the capability of connecting to the Internet;

a second remote appliance coupled to said second data collection device, said second remote appliance comprising a second memory, said remote appliance further including a second port coupled to said second data collection device, said second remote appliance adapted to receive said second data file through said second port and store said second data file in said memory, said second remote appliance having the capability of connecting to the Internet;

an Internet connection coupling said first remote appliance to the Internet;

an Internet connection coupling said second remote appliance to the Internet;

a central server coupled to the Internet, said central server including a web site;

said first remote appliance being adapted to transfer said first data file stored on said first remote appliance to said central server;

said second remote appliance being adapted to transfer said second data file stored on said second remote appliance to said central server;

a first accounting server, said first accounting server connecting to the Internet and being adapted for transferring said first data file stored on said central server to said first accounting server, and

a second accounting server, said second accounting server connecting to the Internet and being adapted for transferring said second data file stored on said central server to said second accounting server,

whereby said first accounting server has access to data collected at said first data collection device and said second accounting server has access to data collected at said second data collection device.

37. An apparatus in accordance with claim 36, wherein said system further comprises:

a personal computer running an Internet browser, said personal computer being connected to the Internet and adapted for accessing said web site including said consolidated data file on said central server;

whereby a user at said personal computer has access to data collected at said first data collection device and said second data collection device.

38. An apparatus in accordance with claim 36, where data collection device is a point of sale terminal.

39. An apparatus in accordance with claim 36, where data collection device is a vending machine.

40: An apparatus in accordance with claim 36, where data collection device is an employee time clock.